

CLAIMS

- 1 1. A method of searching a plurality of self-describing, structured documents,
2 said documents including document fields, the method including:
- 3 providing a user interface including
- 4 a document type selection filter;
- 5 one or more document field selection filters, context sensitive to a selected
6 document type;
- 7 one or more value specification fields, context sensitive to the document
8 fields;
- 9 as non-displaying fields, one or more path specifications corresponding to
10 the document fields and to the value specification fields, said path
11 specifications identifying nodes to be tested against completed value
12 specifications;
- 13 receiving the selected document type and the completed value specifications and
14 the corresponding path specifications; and
- 15 searching a subset of the self-describing, structured documents based on the
16 completed value specifications and the corresponding path specifications, the
17 subset including documents of the selected document type.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the path specifications are compliant with
2 any version of an XPath standard.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the self-describing, structured documents are
2 compliant with any version of an XML standard.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the self-describing, structured documents are
2 compliant with any version of an XML standard.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the user interface is a character string
2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 6. The method of claim 3, wherein the user interface is a character string
2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 7. The method of claim 4, wherein the user interface is a character string
2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 8. A method of searching a plurality of self-describing, structured documents,
2 said documents including document fields, the method including:

3 providing a user interface including

4 a document type selection filter;

5 one or more document field selection filters, context sensitive to a selected
6 document type;

7 one or more value specification fields, context sensitive to the document
8 fields;

9 receiving the selected document type and the completed value specifications and
10 document field identifiers corresponding to the completed value specifications;

11 looking up path specifications corresponding to the document field identifiers,
12 said paths specifications identifying nodes to be tested against completed value
13 specifications;

14 searching a subset of the self-describing, structured documents based on the
15 completed value specifications and the corresponding path specifications, the
16 subset including documents of the selected document type.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the path specifications are compliant with
2 any version of an XPath standard.

1 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the self-describing, structured documents are
2 compliant with any version of an XML standard.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the self-describing, structured documents
2 are compliant with any version of an XML standard.

1 12. The method of claim 8, wherein the user interface is a character string
2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 13. The method of claim 10, wherein the user interface is a character string
2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 14. The method of claim 11, wherein the user interface is a character string
2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 15. A method of specifying where to search among a plurality of self-describing,
2 structured documents, said documents having document types and including
3 document fields, the method including:

4 displaying a user interface including

5 a document type selection filter;

6 one or more document field selection filters, context sensitive to a selected
7 document type; and

8 one or more value specification fields, context sensitive to the document
9 fields;

10 the user interface further including, as non-displaying fields, one or more path
11 specifications corresponding to the document fields and to the value specification
12 fields, said paths specifications identifying nodes in the documents to be tested
13 against completed value specifications;

14 receiving from a user the selected document type and the completed value
15 specifications; and

16 transmitting to a server the selected document type and the completed value
17 specifications and the path specifications corresponding to the completed value
18 specifications.

1 16. A computer user interface, including:

2 a document type selection filter;

3 one or more document field selection filters, context sensitive to a selected
 4 document type;
 5 one or more value specification fields, context sensitive to the document fields;
 6 and
 7 as non-displaying fields, one or more path specifications corresponding to the
 8 document fields and to the value specification fields, said paths specifications
 9 identifying nodes of a self-describing, structured document to be tested against
 10 completed value specifications.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the path specifications are compliant with
 2 any version of an XPath standard.

1 18. The method of claim 16, wherein the self-describing, structured documents
 2 are compliant with any version of an XML standard.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein the self-describing, structured documents
 2 are compliant with any version of an XML standard.

1 20. The method of claim 16, wherein the user interface is a character string
 2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 21. The method of claim 18, wherein the user interface is a character string
 2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 22. The method of claim 19, wherein the user interface is a character string
 2 compliant with any version of an HTML standard.

1 23. A method of providing a searchable data base of self-describing, structured
 2 documents, including:

3 loading a set of document field and path specification pairs, said path
 4 specifications identifying nodes of self-describing, structured documents to be
 5 indexed and searched;
 6 indexing portions of the documents corresponding to the document field and path
 7 specification pairs; and

8 providing a user interface based on the set, including
 9 a document type selection filter;
 10 one or more document field selection filters, context sensitive to a selected
 11 document type;
 12 one or more value specification fields, context sensitive to the document
 13 fields; and
 14 as non-displaying fields, one or more path specifications corresponding to the
 15 document fields and to the value specification fields, said paths specifications
 16 identifying nodes of the documents to be tested against completed value
 17 specifications.

1 24. A method of providing a searchable data base of self-describing, structured
 2 documents, including:
 3 loading a set of document type and path specification pairs, said path
 4 specifications identifying nodes of documents to be indexed and searched;
 5 indexing portions of the documents corresponding to the document type and path
 6 specification pairs; and
 7 providing a user interface including
 8 a document type selection filter;
 9 one or more document field selection filters, context sensitive to a selected
 10 document type;
 11 one or more value specification fields, context sensitive to the document
 12 fields; and
 13 as non-displaying fields, one or more aliases to path specifications corresponding
 14 to the document fields and to the value specification fields, said paths
 15 specifications identifying nodes of the documents to be tested against completed
 16 value specifications.